



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
**BUREAU OF LAND
MANAGEMENT**

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT TO BEGIN NEPA PROCESS FOR THE GOLDEN CURRANT SOLAR PROJECT APPLICATION

LAS VEGAS – The BLM has granted a variance for the Golden Currant Solar Project right-of-way application in coordination with appropriate federal, state, local agencies, Tribes, and public outreach. This begins the National Environmental Policy Act analysis of the project.

The Golden Currant Solar Project is a proposed 400-MW utility-scale photovoltaic solar power generation and battery storage facility on approximately 4,456 acres of BLM-managed public land located in the Pahrump Valley in Clark County, approximately five miles southeast of the Town of Pahrump and approximately 26 miles west of Las Vegas.

After careful consideration of all the information gathered from local, state, and federal agencies, Tribes, and the public, the BLM has determined to continue processing the application and proceed with initiation of the National Environmental Policy Act process.

“The 2012 [Western Solar Plan](#) identified solar energy zones in areas with low resource conflict, access to transmission, and a high potential for solar energy development on public lands; variance areas were also identified to accommodate the flexibility on lands outside designated solar energy zones,” **said Coreen Francis, Acting Las Vegas Field Office Manager**. “Proposals for utility-scale solar development in these areas must be granted a variance and complete full environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act including public scoping and preparation of an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement.”

BLM hosted two virtual information forums in July 2022 to gather public input for the variance determination. These meetings provided a description of the application evaluation process, including the variance process, information on the proposed Golden Currant Solar Project, and the opportunity to ask questions and provide public input. The virtual information forums were attended by a total of 59 individuals and 42 comments were received. Additionally, 32 comments were received during the public input period for the Golden Currant Solar Project.

The BLM also conducted an agency meeting with federal, state, local, and Tribal governments for the Pahrump Valley solar projects, including the Golden Currant Solar Project and provided an agency input period. The virtual meeting was attended by six agencies and one Tribe. Four agency comment letters were received during the agency input period. The BLM sent letters to Tribes to assess initial interest on the Golden Currant Solar Project and invited the tribes to initiate formal government-to-government consultation. Tribal consultation is ongoing.

The next step for the Golden Currant Solar Project in the National Environmental Policy Act process would be publication of the Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement, which starts the public scoping process and comment period. Interested stakeholders will have multiple opportunities to provide input during the process. The variance determination and supporting documentation, including the Input Summary Report, and additional information for the Golden Currant Solar Project can be found at <https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2021533/510>

The BLM manages vast stretches of public lands that have the potential to make significant contributions to the nation’s renewable energy portfolio. To promote the development of these energy sources, the BLM provides sites for environmentally sound development of renewable energy on public lands. The efficient deployment of renewable energy from our nation’s public lands is crucial in achieving the Biden-Harris administration’s goal of a carbon pollution-free power sector by 2035, as well as Congress’ direction in the Energy Act of 2020 to permit 25 gigawatts of solar, wind, and geothermal production on public lands no later than 2025.

-BLM-

The BLM manages more than 245 million acres of public land located primarily in 12 western states, including Alaska, on behalf of the American people. The BLM also administers 700 million acres of sub-surface mineral estate throughout the nation. Our mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America’s public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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RELEASE DATE

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

ORGANIZATION

Bureau of Land Management

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